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**To:** CAP Members

**Subject:** Hosting a Laboratory Tour

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A laboratory tour is the single best way to advocate for pathology and one of the most effective ways to help you develop a relationship with your Member of Congress. These tours help put a face on the profession and demonstrate pathology's crucial role in the delivery of quality health care. Many of the CAP's strongest allies on Capitol Hill first became acquainted with their local pathologists and the issues affecting their practice during a lab tour.

### **Tour Preparation**

- Send an invitation on your facility's letterhead using the template provided (see page 5) and email or fax to the legislator's scheduler. Contact [PathNET@cap.org](mailto:PathNET@cap.org) for scheduler's contact information.
- Invite your facility's top staff to participate in the tour, but avoid having too large a group.
- Map out a route. Plan ahead to select particular areas that illustrate the points you want to make. Demonstrate the process involved in various tests. Create a schedule that allows time for breaks, discussion, and delays.
- If desired, CAP staff will work with the legislator's and your facility's press offices to arrange for local media coverage during the tour.
- Rehearse the day before and have your colleagues ask possible questions. CAP Advocacy staff are also happy to speak with you about legislative issues, send you issue briefs or other policy materials, and provide other assistance.
- Make sure the legislator's office has the laboratory's address and any necessary instructions regarding parking, which entrance to use, etc.
- Provide the legislator's office with a contact name and phone number in case of last minute schedule changes.
- Designate one of the laboratory staff to take photos during the tour.

### **Conducting the Tour**

- Be at the entrance to greet the legislator and staff when they arrive and escort them to the lab.
- Give a brief overview of the planned tour and a general description of your laboratory.
- During the tour, discuss the facility with your legislator, using simple terms and descriptions.
- Introduce employees by name as they are encountered along the tour. The employees are constituents.
- Stay on schedule. Be aware of the time the legislator has available.



### **After the Tour**

- Send a thank you letter to your legislator using the template provided (see page 6). Include the names of any key aides who accompanied the legislator on the tour. Re-emphasize points made during the visit and answer any questions left unanswered during the tour.
- Provide CAP staff with a summary of the visit and photos, so that your successful tour may be featured in STATLINE and/or on the CAP's social media.
- Follow up with the legislator's office and continue to maintain contact. Position yourself to become a resource on pathology for the legislator and staff.



## Sample Lab Tour Agenda

*All times are approximate. Sample agenda items may be amended where appropriate.*

8:00 AM: **Congressman Arrives at the Laboratory**

8:00 AM to 8:05 AM: **Greetings and Introductions**

- Greet the Congressman, introduce him to pathologists and laboratory personnel, and provide him with a brief overview of the facility (i.e. what services are performed here, the role of a pathologist, how many counties and patients it serves). Paint a picture for the Congressman about the importance of your facility, as well as the services you provide to the community.
- If possible, provide him with a lab coat for the duration of the tour.
- Deliver any relevant policy materials.

8:05 AM to 8:35 AM: **Slide Preparation**

- Walk the Congressman through a slide preparation.
- Allow the Congressman the opportunity to view a slide through a multi-headed microscope.
- Use clear, concise terms so that the Congressman understands. Remember, the elected official usually has little knowledge of pathology issues, so it's important to help him understand the process.
- Demonstrate any key technology specific to your laboratory.
- Photos should be taken throughout the demonstration.
- If time permits, walk the Congressman through the differences between "clear" and "unclear" diagnoses. In other words, feel free to show the Representative the debate that ensues when trying to diagnose difficult slides.

8:35 AM to 8:45 AM: **Hospital Tour**

- Highlight key aspects of the facility
- Introduce the Congressman to the hospital administrator.
- Focus on parts of the hospital that are closely related to pathology.



- ***Remember - the majority of the tour should be conducted in the lab to keep the focus on pathology.***

8:45 AM to 9:00 AM:

**Question and Answer Session**

- Upon conclusion of the tour, the Congressman may prefer to make some brief remarks or solicit some questions from the participants or laboratory employees.
- If the tour incorporates a question and answer session or additional remarks, be sure to incorporate this time into your tour. Be sure to clear any questions for the Congressman with CAP and Congressional staff before the tour.

9:00 AM:

**Congressman Departs**

- Exchange business cards with the Congressman and key staffers.
- Offer to provide any additional assistance to the Representative or staff on future pathology or health care issues.



**SAMPLE LAB TOUR INVITE LETTER FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS**  
**(Letter should be placed on your facility's letterhead. Please email a PDF copy to**  
**[PathNET@cap.org](mailto:PathNET@cap.org))**

Date

The Honorable [Member's Name]  
U.S. House of Representatives OR United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515 (House Zip) OR 20510 (Senate Zip)

Fax:

Attn: [Scheduler's Name]

Dear Representative/Senator [Name]:

On behalf of [insert your lab], its pathologists, and its laboratory professionals, I would like to cordially invite you to tour our laboratory in \_\_\_\_\_. This laboratory tour will provide me, as well as many of my colleagues that live and work in your Congressional district, the opportunity to acquaint you with the role of anatomic and clinical pathology in the delivery of healthcare.

**[Here you can place text that is pertinent to your lab]**

[Insert your lab] plays an important role in our community by delivering quality healthcare to thousands of your constituents. I would like to demonstrate some of the diagnostic tests performed in the lab and discuss what I see as the role of pathologists in today's medicine. This educational and entertaining tour will last approximately one hour.

I would appreciate your staff contacting me either by phone, [insert number] or email, [insert email] to discuss the preferred date and time for the tour.

Sincerely,

**Your Name**  
Your Lab



**SAMPLE LAB TOUR THANK YOU LETTER FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS  
AFTER THE TOUR**

**(Letter should be placed on your facility's letterhead. Please email a PDF copy to  
[PathNET@cap.org](mailto:PathNET@cap.org))**

Date

The Honorable [Member's Name]

U.S. House of Representatives OR United States Senate

Washington, DC 20515 (House Zip) OR 20510 (Senate Zip)

Fax:

Attn: [Scheduler's Name]

Dear Representative/Senator [Name]:

Thank you for touring the pathology laboratory at [insert your lab] in \_\_\_\_\_. I appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedule to visit this facility and learn more about specific legislation that affects pathology. I sincerely hope that the tour was both educational and entertaining!

I thoroughly enjoyed showing you the inner workings of a pathology laboratory and analyzing different specimen slides. In particular, I hope that our discussion regarding the important role pathologists play in the delivery of health care was informative and useful as you and your colleagues work with various regulatory agencies to improve health care in America.

[Please feel free to add any specifics that were discussed during the tour.]

Once again, thank you for touring the pathology laboratory at [insert your lab] and please do not hesitate to contact me either by phone, [insert number], or email, [insert email], with any questions or comments pertaining to pathology or health care policy in general. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

**Your Name**

Your Lab